

T H E

3/13/3

TEARS of BRITANNIA:

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A N

ELEGIAC POEM.

OCCASIONED BY

The Death of his Most Sacred MAJESTY
King GEORGE II.

K

*Heu pietas! heu prisca fides! invictaque bello
Dextera.*—————

VIRGIL.

L O N D O N:

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A N

ELEGIAC POEM, &c.

O ! FOR the Muse that breathes the tuneful lays
When parting Heroes claim their Country's
praise !

O ! for the strains by filial sorrows paid
To grace with pious rites a Parent's shade !

When grief unfeign'd the heaving bosom bears ;

When flow the eyes with undisssembled tears ;

Lead me, ah ! lead thro' paths untry'd before ;

O ! teach my Muse advent'rous heights to soar ;

While rashly bold she prunes her infant wing,
 And strikes to solemn themes the trembling string: 10
 A Muse unskill'd the studious maze to rove,
 And crop the laurels of PARNASSUS' grove:
 Who ne'er retir'd in silent bow'rs to dwell
 Where Contemplation holds her peaceful cell:
 For her not Isis pours her silver stream, 15
 Nor friendly CAMI assists the Poet's theme:
 Where either flood the smiling border laves;
 While Learning's turrets tremble on the waves: 20
 There thro' each grove the sons of Fancy stray,
 And calmly meditate the polish'd lay:
 Some skillful hand may there the lyre awake,
 The mournful task some happier Bard may take:
 The mournful task demands no vulgar name, 25
 A Nation's woes the sad oblation claim.

Mean-time an humbler Muse by praise unfir'd, 25
By duty challeng'd, and by grief inspir'd,
First of the train attempts her voice to raise,
And thus to BRITAIN'S tears her tribute pays.

Al! say, from whence around this solemn show,
This sudden gloom of universal wee! 30
Why on each face such speaking anguish spread,
As all our fates were number'd with the dead?
See! dire Affliction stretch her chilling hand:
She pours her vase of sorrow o'er the land!
'Tis past!--so Heav'n decrees!--his will succeeds--- 35
Fate drops the veil---and pale BRITANNIA bleeds!
The dismal tidings fly from coast to coast,
The King, the Father of his Country lost!

SEE! Friend with Friend, in grief pathetic join'd,
 Speak the sad feeling of a tender mind ; 40
 While on their lips the fault'ring accents stay,
 And scarcely yield the greeting of the day ;
 Fast from their eyes the gushing tears run o'er,
 And in their own the public loss deplore.

Now darkness spreads her sable veil around, 45
 And midnight silence hovers o'er the ground,
 What lone distress her baleful influence show'rs!
 What heavy gloom involves AUGUSTA's tow'rs!
 Hark! thro' the air, with solemn peal and flow,
 The direful warning tells BRITANNIA's woe! 50
 Each awful period tolls the parting knell!
 Each awful period speaks the last farewell!

At ev'ry peal the trembling hearers start,
 And sudden chillness freezes ev'ry heart !
 Hark ! where resounding deep from pole to pole, 55

With hoarser notes BRITANNIA'S thunders roll !

Those thunders, wont a Nation's joy to show,

Are now the groans that speak a Nation's woe.

How oft, alas ! they hail'd the natal hour

That gave a GEORGE to bless this happy shore ! 60

How oft they bad the land and sea proclaim

BRITANNIA'S triumphs and her Monarch's fame !

One dire event now damps their loudest breath,

Their triumphs mourning, and their tidings death !

Now the last rites in solemn splendor show, 65

The pomp of death, magnificence of woe !

See! BRITAIN'S Peers in long procession led
 Where sleep the reliques of th' imperial dead.
 What parting tears from ev'ry gazer start!
 What tender anguish feizes ev'ry heart! 70
 Such is the tribute grateful BRITONS pay,
 When grief and duty bear an equal sway.
 See! o'er the rest a royal Suff'rer move
 Oppress'd with sorrows of superior love.
 Lo! him who rescu'd ALBION from despair, 75
 When wide Rebellion fann'd the flames of war;
 No more his soul her fortitude supplies,
 Now all the Hero in the Mourner dies!
 Yet, lov'd in woe, the pious Son appears
 Great in his weakness, glorious in his tears! 80

BEHOLD the sacred fane the pomp inclose,
 Where *British* Heroes in their urns repose.
 There to the tomb the dear remains they trust,
 Where pow'r and title shrink to nameless dust.
 There streaming eyes the mournful rites pursue, 85
 There fault'ring tongues pronounce the last adieu.

75 FAREWELL the first, the greatest of mankind,
 Farewell the boast of ev'ry *British* mind.
 Farewell the guardian of BRITANNIA'S State,
 Not more in council than in virtues great! 90

80 SAY, what are those to deathless praise consign'd?
 The plagues of earth and scourges of mankind!

The boasted tyrants of a servile state,
 By rapine nourish'd, by oppression great.
 Who build in human ills a glorious name, 95
 And reap in bloody fields the wreaths of fame.
 Alas! how rare in sceptred Kings to find
 The soft impressions of a social mind!
 He whom we mourn a soul humane confess'd;
 Nor scorn'd the virtues of a subject's breast: 100
 Nor vain of empire, nor of conquest proud,
 He claim'd the nobler attribute of good,
 Parent of all, he view'd, with equal care,
 The lowly suppliant, or the titled star:
 Nor deem'd a subject that his kingdom gave, 105
 Too high to punish, or too low to save.
 When angry laws requir'd the victim's breath,
 The Monarch suffer'd in th' offender's death:

Thro'

Thro' ev'ry act parental mildness ran,
 He doom'd the guilty, while he wept the man! 110

Such was the King for whom our sorrows flow,
 And such the worth that claims BRITANNIA'S woe!

SEE! laurell'd Conquest o'er his ashes mourn!

See! sacred Freedom bending o'er his urn!

See! Justice fighting at her guardian's doom! 115

And Mercy weeping at AUGUSTUS' tomb!

O! THAT the Muse cou'd bend her daring flight

To climes irradiate with prophetic light!

Cou'd pierce th' opposing clouds that veil mankind

To view what happy years remain behind: 120

Cou'd all the scenes of ALBION'S glory trace,

And paint the blessings of a future race:

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Yet

Yet may she still her kind relief bestow,
 And gild with better hope the clouds of woe.
 While pond'ring deep in seas of trouble tost, 125
 I mus'd on BRITAIN, and her Sov'reign lost;
 A heavy sleep oppress'd my slumb'ring eyes,
 And fancy bad this mystic vision rise.

FAR in a vale, where scarce a beam of light
 Pierc'd the dun shadows of eternal night, 130
 Methought I saw forlorn BRITANNIA lye,
 Grief on her cheek, and anguish in her eye;
 As first when Rumour with contagious breath
 Alarm'd her startled ear with sounds of death.
 Around I saw unnumber'd trophies spread, 135
 The mighty glories of the sacred dead!

And paint the blessings of a future race.

Ambition check'd amid his wild career,
 And GALLIA bent beneath the *British* spear:
 Oppression quell'd before the righteous sword,
 And Freedom's sons to Freedom's right restor'd. 140
 All these she view'd, but view'd with tear-full eye,
 Each object call'd anew the rising sigh:
 At length the Mourner thus her sorrows spoke,
 And from her lips these troubled accents broke:

'YES, once alas! with joy on ev'ry hand 145
 I view'd the triumphs of this happy land!
 Fair Freedom here her radiant visage rais'd,
 While *British* arms with foreign conquest blaz'd!
 Then royal GEORGE, a dear lamented name,
 Pursu'd by virtue's deeds the paths of fame. 150

How

How late, alas! I view'd with raptur'd eyes

Beneath his sway BRITANNIA'S honours rise!

Beheld on ev'ry clime my banners rear'd,

Beheld my sons on ev'ry shore rever'd!

My ships triumphant plough'd the various seas; 155

My streamers wav'd in ev'ry fav'ring breeze!

In distant lands my spreading laurels grew,

And either IND the pow'r of BRUNSWICK knew.

Now, sad reverse! see all my fortune crost,

And desolation brooding o'er my coast! 160

Loft is the King who bad my thunders roar;

Who cheer'd the voice of Fame shall cheer no more!

What threat'ning darkness hovers o'er my head

Since GEORGE the guardian of my realm is dead!

SHE said, and speaking pour'd a plenteous tide; 165
 Far distant THAMES to ev'ry sigh reply'd:
 He bad his winding streams the loss deplore,
 And taught the name of GEORGE from shore to shore.

While thus she sorrow'd, darting from above,
 A sudden gleam illumin'd all the grove: 170
 Lo! from a cloud celestial VIRTUE shin'd,
 Fair source of bliss, and guardian of mankind.
 Truth on her breast in native splendor shone,
 Clear as the morn, and dazzling as the sun.
 Beneath her feet subjected Vice she quell'd, 175
 And bound in chains each rebel passion held.
 Her piercing eyes with smiles the good survey'd,
 And cast a brightness o'er Affliction's shade.

With pow'rful words the hearer's soul she warm'd,
And thus the Mourner from her sorrows charm'd: 180

BRITANNIA, rise! the voice of comfort know:
Propitious VIRTUE comes to sooth thy woe.
Still for thy sake my watchful cares I bend,
May VIRTUE ever call BRITANNIA friend!
Weep'st thou the loss of ALBION's Father fled? 185
Thy tears are worthy of the sacred dead:
Nor VIRTUE's self disdains thy plaints to hear,
Nor VIRTUE's self disdains the pitying tear.
To him you mourn my choicest gifts were shown,
Most at his heart, and ever near his throne: 190
Long, long the Monarch rul'd this transient stage,
Rever'd in honours, and rever'd in age!

Till, call'd by Heav'n, he sunk to peaceful rest,
 His people blessing, by his people blest!
 Then teach thy sons to bear the mortal part; 195
 Heav'n claims submission from a grateful heart:
 Nor while we mourn what fate has snatch'd away,
 Forget the blessing of the present day,
 Now, now, BRITANNIA! raise thy sinking head;
 Nor deem with honour'd GEORGE thy glories fled. 200
 See! where he leaves a royal plant behind,
 Whose shade shall prove the shelter of mankind.
 Beneath my eye it's spreading branches grew,
 Rose in my beams, and flourish'd in my view.
 I kept it safe from ev'ry noxious pow'r, 205
 Nor suffer'd Vice to nip it's early flow'r.
 Behold in GEORGE the darling youth appears
 Bride of my hopes, and offspring of my cares!

Still shall my sacred pow'r his footsteps stay,
 And guide him safe thro' Empire's arduous way. 210
 Now turn, and view beneath my leading hand
 Another GEORGE presiding o'er thy land :
 See! where he makes his awful mandates known,
 And breathes the voice of freedom from the throne!
 Secur'd in BRITAIN'S love the foe he braves; 215
 (No haughty tyrant o'er a land of slaves)
 'Till happier scenes in nearer prospect rise,
 Till Peace, my fav'rite, from her native skies,
 Shall scatter blessings with a bounteous hand,
 And plant her olives o'er th' exulting land. 220

SHE said; and ceasing, calm'd BRITANNIA'S woe:
 Strait from her eyes the tears forget to flow;

A ray of joy her fainting soul retrieves;

Again reviv'd her drooping spirit lives:

Smiling she finds her former peace restor'd,

225

And ev'ry hope renew'd in GEORGE the THIRD.

F I N I S.

A ray of joy her fainting soul retrieves;

Again reviv'd her drooping spirit lives;

Smiling the fond reflections she re-views;

And every hope the third time she re-views.



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